



# DARK DOMINION™



J. JAMES 93  
M. WITHERBY

# "THE GATHERING DARKNESS"

HAUNTS OF THE  
VERY RICH  
Part One

CREATED BY JIM SHOOTER

MIDTOWN MANHATTAN,  
ON BROADWAY NEAR  
WEST 46 TH STREET

5:56 P.M.

FOR YEARS THIS CITY'S  
BEEN GETTING WORSE.  
ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT.

BARELY PAST SUNDOWN,  
AND ALREADY THE FEAR  
IS SO THICK, YOU CAN  
POUR IT ON PANCAKES.

THE PEOPLE WHO PREY  
ON OTHERS ARE OUT IN  
FORCE....

AND THE THINGS THAT  
PREY ON THEM...

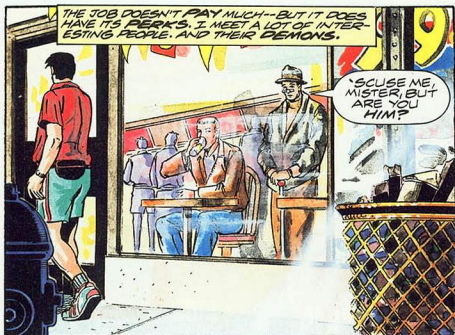
...WELL, THIS IS  
THEIR CITY NOW.

I'M TRYING TO  
CHANGE THAT.

DEVELOPED  
BY  
JIM  
SHOOTER  
AND  
STEVE  
DITKO

WRITTEN BY LEN WEIN / PENCILED BY JOSEPH A. JAMES  
INKED BY MIKE BARREIRO, BOB DOWNS AND CHARLES YOAKUM  
PAINTED BY TIM PERKINS / LETTERED BY GEORGE ROBERTS  
EDITED BY DEBORAH PURCELL AND ED POLGARDY





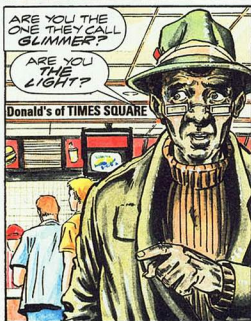
THE JOB DOESN'T PAY MUCH--BUT IT DOES HAVE ITS PERKS. I MEET A LOT OF INTERESTING PEOPLE. AND THEIR DEMONS.

'SCUSE ME MISTER, BUT ARE YOU HIM?



WELL, I'M MICHAEL ALEXANDER. IF THAT'S WHAT YOU MEAN.

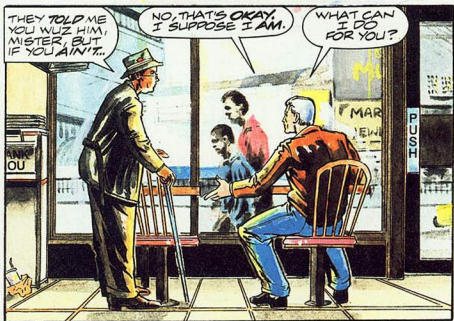
AN' I'M ELWOOD JENKINS--BUT THAT AIN'T WHAT I'M ASKIN'.



ARE YOU THE ONE THEY CALL GLIMMER?

ARE YOU THE LIGHT?

Donald's of TIMES SQUARE



THEY TOLD ME YOU WUZ HIM, MISTER, BUT IF YOU AIN'T...

NO, THAT'S OKAY. I SUPPOSE I AM.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?



I-I ALMOST DON'T KNOW WHERE T'START. MY LIFE IS SUCH A MESS....

I MEAN, JUS' LAST WEEK, MY WIFE OF 23 YEARS LEFT ME.

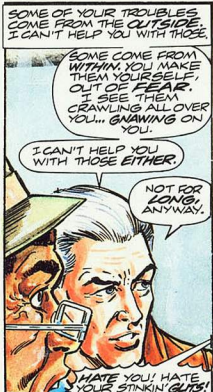
AN' WITH MY BUM'LEG, I CAN'T HOLD ON TO NO JOB.



I REALLY WISH I COULD, FRIEND, BUT I THINK YOU'VE COME TO THE WRONG GUY.

DESPITE WHAT THEY MAY'VE TOLD YOU, I'M REALLY NOT A MIRACLE WORKER.

PLEASE, MISTER ALEXANDER, TELL ME HOW TO MAKE IT BETTER.



SOME OF YOUR TROUBLES COME FROM THE OUTSIDE. I CAN'T HELP YOU WITH THOSE.

SOME COME FROM WITHIN. YOU MAKE THEM YOURSELF, OUT OF FEAR. I SEE THEM CRAWLING ALL OVER YOU... GAWKING ON YOU.

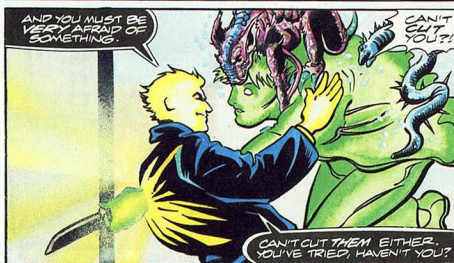
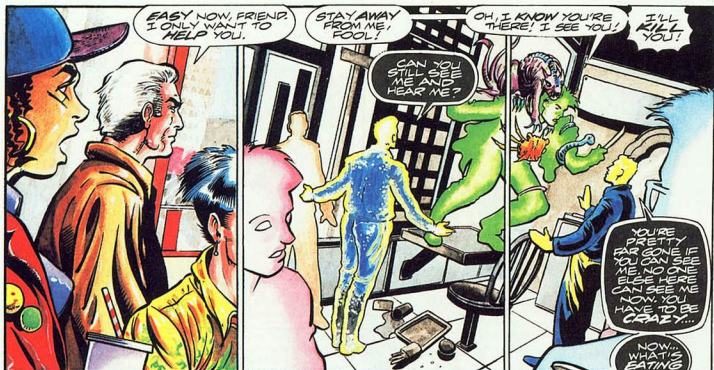
I CAN'T HELP YOU WITH THOSE EITHER.

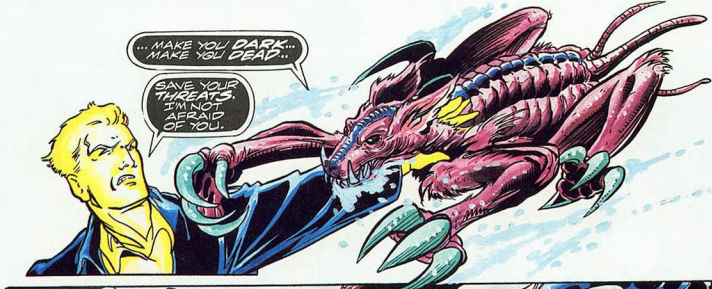
NOT FOR LONG, ANYWAY.

HATE YOU! HATE YOUR STINKIN' GLITS!









... MAKE YOU DARK...  
MAKE YOU DEAD...

SAVE YOUR  
THREATS.  
I'M NOT  
AFRAID  
OF YOU.



FEAR MAKES  
YOU BLIND.  
FEAR LIMITS  
YOU. FEAR  
MAKES YOU  
WEAK. I'M  
NOT AFRAID.

... MAKE  
YOU...

... \*GLK\*...

**SNAP!**

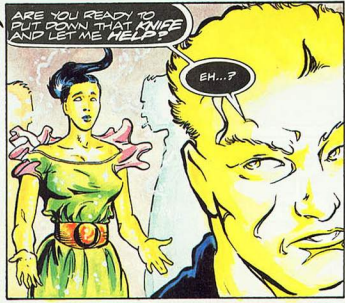


THAT'S RIGHT, YOU  
IRRITATING LITTLE  
NASTIES!

YOU'D BETTER RUN  
BEFORE YOU WIND UP  
LIKE THE BIG UGLY  
HERE...

... SO MUCH  
SUFFERING  
AT THE  
SLY MOOSE

NOW HOW  
ABOUT  
YOU,  
FRIEND?



ARE YOU READY TO  
PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE  
AND LET ME HELP?

EH...?



WHO ARE...  
HUH?

SHE'S  
GONE!

BUT I  
COULDN'T  
SWORN...



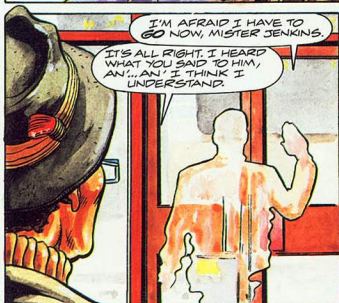
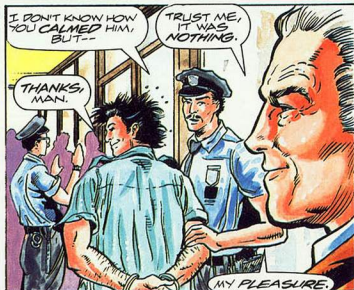
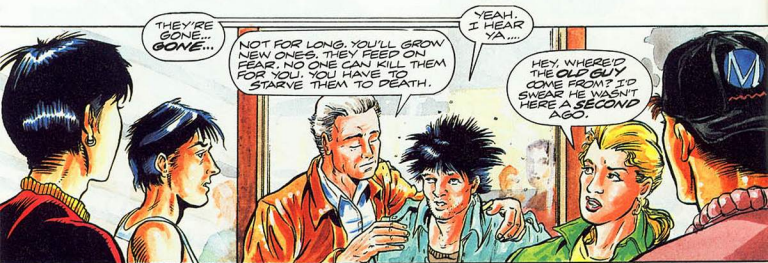
WELL, NO  
MATTER...

I SUPPOSE I'LL BE  
SEEING A LOT OF  
BIG THINGS  
BEFORE I FINALLY  
LEARN MY WAY  
AROUND THE  
QUANTUM FIELD.

I... I  
ALMOST...  
I DIDN'T  
MEAN TO...  
SORRY...

I'M  
SORRY...  
SO  
SORRY...







NOW HOW DOES  
THAT OLD SONG  
GO AGAIN?

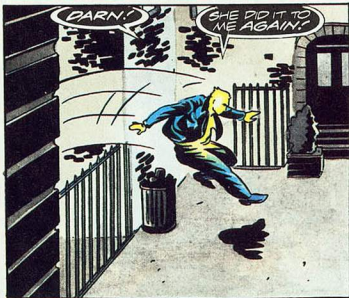
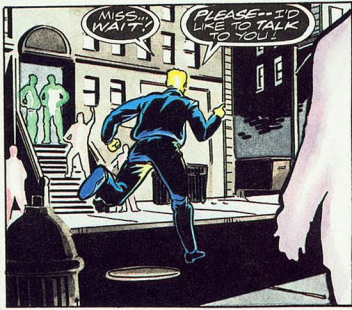
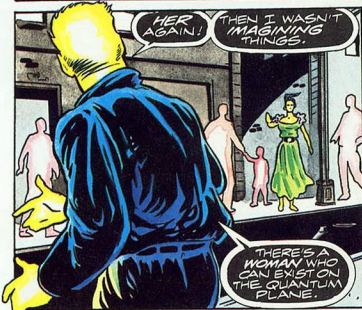
"NEW YORK,  
NEW YORK,  
A HELL OF  
A TOWN..."

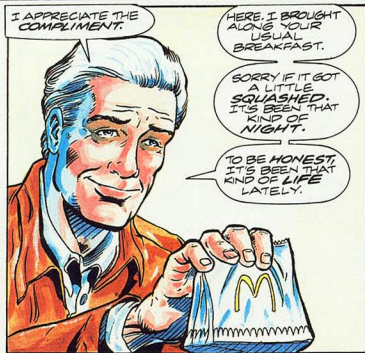
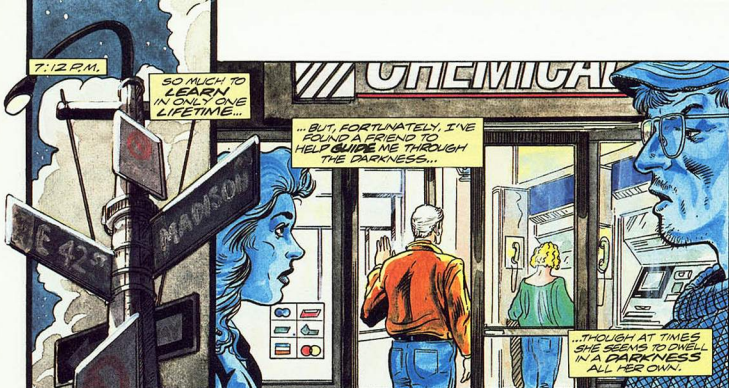
WHEN THEY WROTE THOSE  
LYRICS, GOLDEN AND GREEN  
COULDN'T HAVE BEGINN TO  
KNOW HOW RIGHT THEY  
WERE....

THERE ARE NO COZY  
CORNERS IN THIS CITY,  
NO TRUE SAFE  
HAVENS...

... BUT BEFORE I'M  
DONE, THERE  
WILL BE.

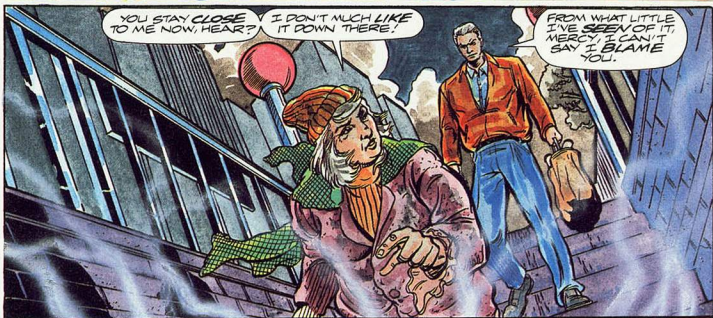
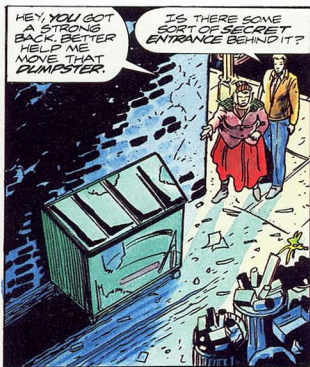




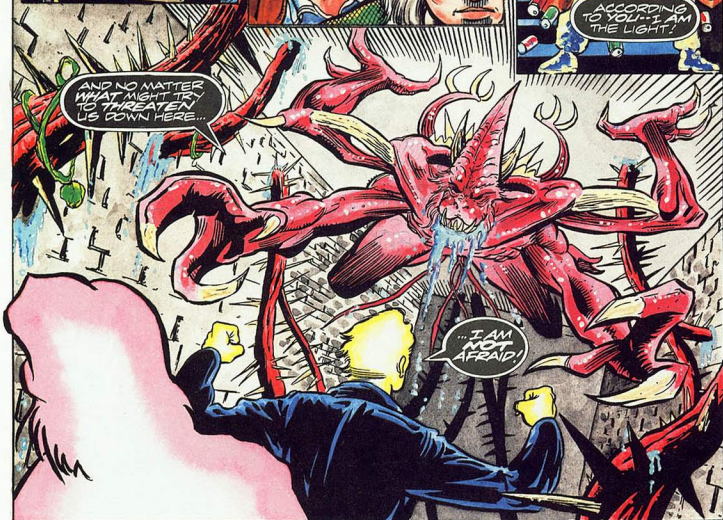


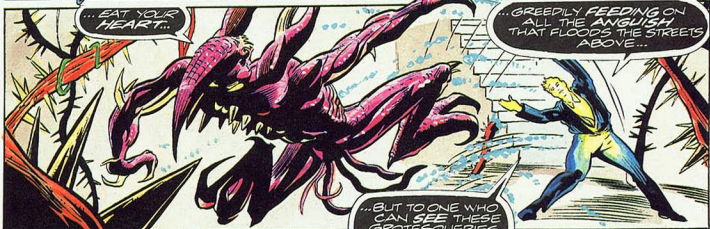
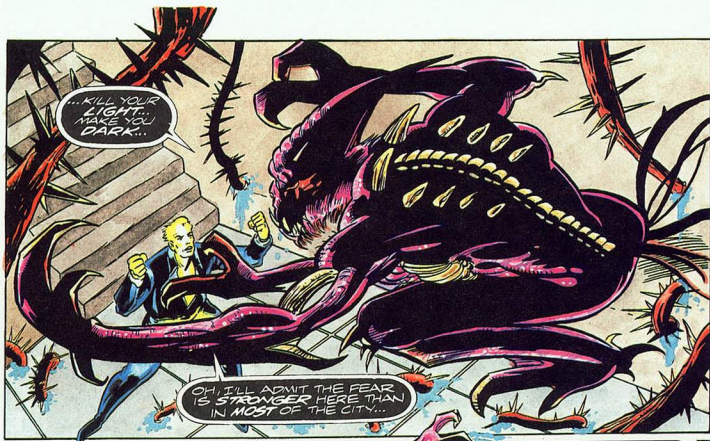




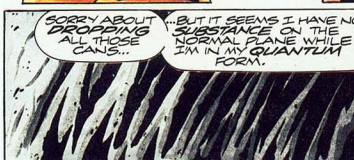


















FIRST TIME I'VE  
ACTUALLY SEEN  
THE SHANTY  
OPEN.

OLD SALVAGE MUST'VE  
KNOWN WE WAS COMING.

AIN'T MUCH OLD  
SAL DON'T KNOW.



WALK NOT THE PATHS  
OF DARKNESS, SAL.  
CLEAVE THEE ONLY  
UNTO THE LIGHT.

SURE, MERCY,  
WHATEVER  
YOU SAY.

YOU HERE FOR ANY  
PARTICULAR  
REASON?



MY FRIEND MICHAEL  
COMES HERE SEEKING  
KNOWLEDGE.

HEY, YOU  
THAT  
MICHAEL?

THE ONE MERCY  
CALLS GLIMMER?

GUESS  
I AM.

WELL, THAT DON'T BUY YOU  
NOTHING HERE.



YOU WANT  
SOMETHING  
FROM OL' SAL,  
YOU GOTTA  
GIVE SOME-  
THING.

YOU THINK  
I DON'T  
KNOW  
THAT?

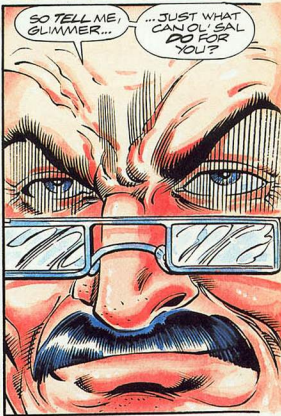
THERE'S  
THE  
HOUSE  
RULES.

HERE, YOU  
GREEDY OLD  
GOAT.



HMMMM...NOT  
EXACTLY THE BEST  
VINTAGE...

...BUT WITH  
A LITTLE  
POLISH,  
GUESS  
THEY'LL DO.



SO TELL ME,  
GLIMMER...

...JUST WHAT  
CAN OL' SAL  
DO FOR  
YOU?

I SAW SOMEONE TODAY,  
SAL. A YOUNG WOMAN  
WHO APPEARS TO EXIST  
ONLY IN THE  
SUBSTRATUM...

...A WOMAN WHO  
WAS NOT FORMED  
FROM THE STUFF  
OF FEAR.

HAVE YOU EVER  
HEARD OF  
ANYONE LIKE  
THAT?

WHISPERED STORIES OF  
FOLKS WHO LEARNED  
HOW TO ENTER THE SUB-  
STRATUM MUCH LIKE YOU  
AND CHASM HAVE...

...BUT WHO SPENT  
SO MUCH TIME  
THERE, THEY LOST  
THE ABILITY TO  
MAKE THE TRANSITION  
BACK TO THE REAL  
WORLD.

HMMM... LET OL'  
SAL THINK FOR  
A SECOND NOW....

NOPE, CAN'T  
REALLY SAY  
AS THAT  
RINGS ANY  
BELLS.

I HAVE HEARD  
SOME RUMORS  
OVER THE YEARS,  
THOUGH....

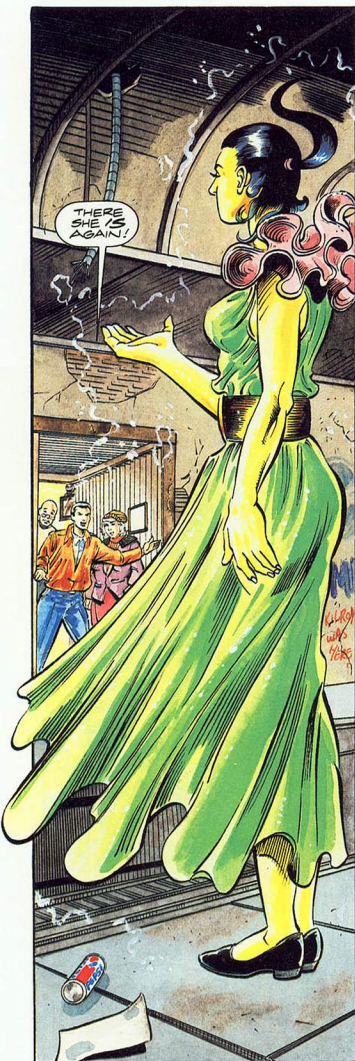
MAYBE THIS  
YOUNG LADY  
FRIEND OF  
YOURS IS ONE  
OF THEM.

SHE ISN'T MY  
FRIEND, SAL.  
I DON'T EVEN  
KNOW HER  
NAME.

BUT IF WHAT YOU  
SAY IS TRUE,  
THEN IT'S POSSIBLE  
THAT...

I... WAIT!







"THE NIGHTGAUNTS!"

"THEY'RE TAKING HER!"

PLEASE DON'T HURT ME...



NO! LET HER GO, DO YOU HEAR ME?

NOOOOO...

LET HER GO!

SURE WISH I COULD SEE WHAT YOU'RE SHOUTING AT, SON.



ANYONE CAN SEE IF THEY HAVE THE COURAGE TO LOOK, SAL.

THE TRICK IS IN KNOWING WHAT TO LOOK FOR.

VERILY, THE WICKED WALK ALL AROUND US...



THEY ALWAYS HAVE MERCY...

...AND I IMAGINE THEY ALWAYS WILL...



...UNLESS WE'RE WILLING TO DO WHAT IT TAKES TO STOP THEM!



AND THUS DOES THE LIGHT VENTURE ANEW INTO THE LAND OF DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH...

IF THIS SO-CALLED GLIMMER GUN IS EVERYTHING YOU SAY HE IS, MERCY...

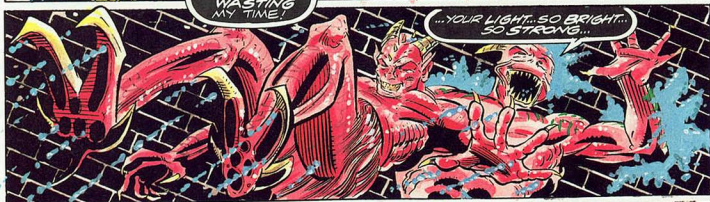
...HE'S GONNA DO JUST FINE.

WHAT THE LORD HATH GIVEN SHALL HE ALSO TAKE AWAY?



AND IF WELL, WE'VE ALL GOTTA GO SOMETIME. HE'S NOT...





NOW WHERE  
IS THE  
YOUNG  
WOMAN  
WHO--

WINNHH!!

WH-  
WHAT  
HIT  
ME?  
NOTHING FROM THE NORMAL PLANE  
SHOULD BE ABLE TO TOUCH ME WHEN  
I'M IN QUANTUM FORM....

AND NOTHING  
FROM YOUR  
PITIFUL  
NORMAL  
PLANE DID!

YOU?

SURPRISE.

BUT  
WHY?

I THOUGHT--

WELL, YOU OBVIOUSLY  
THOUGHT WRONG, OLD STICK!

YOU,  
TOO?

WHO ELSE?  
THIS IS,  
AFTER ALL,  
MY  
DOMAIN.

YOU MAY  
CALL ME  
CHASM!

AS YOU'VE  
DOUBTLESSLY  
BLESSED BY  
NOW, WE'VE BEEN  
EXPECTING  
YOU!

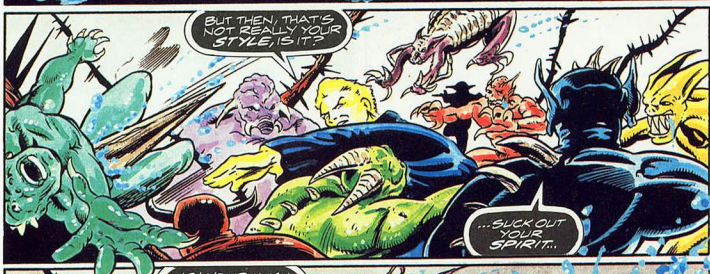


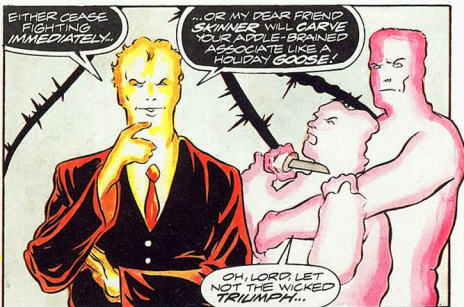
















NEXT ISSUE:  
"LET THERE BE  
LIGHT!"

HERE IT IS!

# WARRIORS OF PLASM™

Zero  
Issue

## SPECIAL EDITION TIN SET



Authorized by DEFIANT™, The River Group Presents...

A True Limited Edition PLASM™ Collectible! Each Individually Numbered Set Features:

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# THE GOOD GUYS™

Be careful  
what you  
wish for...

You just  
might  
get it.





# Jim Shooter

## EDITOR IN CHIEF

Welcome to Manhattan. You'll notice that people stare at the sidewalk in front of them as they walk, avoiding even fleeting eye contact. Late at night, on a lonely block, they may cross the street to avoid passing close by you, though it's a well-lit block, though you're well-dressed and unthreatening, though probably hundreds of people are within shouting distance. You step into the elevator in an apartment building. A person already in the elevator cab darts out just before the door closes to avoid riding alone with you, though they've probably seen you before, though they know you've passed the scrutiny of the doorman.

Don't get in trouble here. No one will help you. No one wants to get involved, because then they may wind up in trouble, too, and who's going to help them? They turn their backs, they cross the street, they ignore you.

They're afraid. A palpable fear pervades this town. If you live here, you know it intimately. Anyone who spends much time here soon becomes aware of it. People from other big cities less afflicted sense it instantly. Small-town midwesterners often have to get mugged first. It's not *entirely* paranoia after all.

I've been thinking about this for a long time. I thought about it while sitting in a hearing room once listening to a superficially respectable-looking fellow lying his tail off under oath. As I watched this fellow shifting, sweating and scrambling to keep his dissembling sounding credible, I realized that he was very much afraid. And I realized that it's not the crime and violence in the city that cause the fear—it's the other way around.

It's the unspoken "or else" that lets you understand the way fear drives

evil. Gotta steal it *or else* I'll never get it. Gotta get them *or else* they'll get me. Gotta eat it, have it, do it now, *or else* my one chance will be gone. Gotta look down on everybody *or else* they'll look down on me.

Fear is the root of all evil. Works of evil create the climate for more fear. It's not entirely paranoia....

Somewhere along the line, a balance was tipped, and Manhattan began a long, slow slide into the abyss. I said the fear was palpable. It's getting worse.

Our new title, debuting with this issue, is called DARK DOMINION™. It's about Manhattan. It's about fear and evil and the one man who *isn't* afraid. It was created by myself and Steve Ditko, who, of course, created *Doctor Strange* and cocreated *Spider-Man*. It's written by Len Wein, who brought you *The Phantom Stranger*, *Swamp Thing*, and the new *X-Men*. It's drawn by Joe James and inked by Bob Downs and Mike Barreiro. It's powerful, super-action-filled, chilling, intense stuff. It's the cornerstone of the DEFIANT universe. I rarely do a salespitch in my column, but this one I especially recommend.

Don't be afraid.

Regarding Marvel's lawsuit against us: The trial is over, and we're waiting for the judge to give us the verdict. I'll let you know what happens. I appreciate the letters of support. Thanks.

In closing, I'd like to offer you these thoughts to ponder:

Ours is a universe governed by quantum mechanics, wherein matter is also energy and particles are also waves.

We are each one a coalescence of forces in the quantum field, an eddy in the stream of timespace—a radiant



nexus of energy, organized into a form that our limited senses perceive as solid matter.

Like a magnet that bends unseen lines of force around itself, which iron fillings sprinkled on a piece of paper will betray, we are each one a powerful generator of an unseen nimbus of force.

Given our limited senses, it is difficult to conceive of the quantum nature of things. We bite into an apple—a simple event—but in quantum terms, two fields of energy are interacting, one shearing through the other.

Drops of nectar composed of minute particles, which are also waves, transact with waves, which are also particles, which comprise the sensory structures on our tongues. Then more waves are relayed across a vast distance, relative to the quantum scale, to a central locus, where they trigger a series of reactions. Thus we conceive of the nature of the energy field we have just encountered—we taste the apple.

*Conception is reality* in our quantum universe.

We can conceive far more than we can perceive.

There are exactly as many things in Heaven and Earth as are dreamt of in our philosophy.

All we imagine is real.

Only the limits are imaginary.

Defiantly,



FYM



# WARRIORS OF PLASM

**COMING IN NOVEMBER...**

**DEFIANT PRESENTS A SPECIAL SEASONAL GIFT:**

**"HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS"**

**A GRIPPING, 64-PAGE GRAPHIC NOVEL**

**CHRONICLING THE UPHEAVAL OF PLASM**

**AND THE FATE OF FIVE HEROES FROM EARTH!**

**Written by Len Wein and Drawn by Dave Cockrum.**

**AND DON'T MISS WARRIORS OF PLASM #4—**

**THE STUNNING CONCLUSION TO**

**"THE SEDITION AGENDA"!**

**Written by Jim Shooter and Drawn by David Lapham.**



**DEFIANT**





# Ed Polgardy

## ASSOCIATE EDITOR

From the moment I read Jim Shooter's script for *DARK DOMINION* #0, I knew that the series was going to be something special. Jim's story instantly sucked me into Michael Alexander's world, giving me the same rush of excitement I felt on discovering Lee and Ditko's *Spider-Man* back in the late 1960s. Of course, in 1968 I was seven years old, and my mind wasn't clouded with adult sensibilities. As I grew older, I found it increasingly difficult to lose myself in *any* type of fiction, especially in comic book stories that featured inhumanly muscled heroes battling super-powered villains *ad nauseam*, with the fighting taking up about ninety-nine percent of an issue. The vast majority of these super-heroic tales also seemed incomplete, not even offering a linear beginning, middle, and end!

With *DARK DOMINION*, it's different: The title's protagonist is a modest—and modestly dressed (i.e., no spandex or tights in sight)—man in his early fifties; the other characters populating the story are engagingly realistic; and the multitude of creepy crawlers lurking in the Quantum Substratum are intriguing visual representations of the spiritual demons that have haunted the collective id of humankind since the beginning of time.

And the story...

I couldn't wait to read more—I was thrilled to be involved with such a fascinating concept.

Even so, giving birth is a painful experience, whether biologically or in the creation, metaphorically speaking, of a new comic-book series.

Len Wein (the cocreator of DC's *Swamp Thing* and the new *X-Men* for Marvel) was brought aboard to write the continuing series, so I knew each

issue would be well-crafted. But Steve Ditko, the original penciler (the same amazing artist who had cocreated the *Spider-Man* comics I loved as a kid!), had decided that he wasn't philosophically comfortable with the concept, and, after delivering his pages for issue #0, he told us that he'd decided not to continue with the book.

The next few weeks were spent hectically trying to line up another penciler. We asked a few well-known artists, but because of the book's deadlines, we couldn't find anyone who could fit it into his already-busy schedule. For a day or two, I thought I had been transported into Michael Alexander's universe: I was starting to feel the Spiders of Anxiety working their way up my spine. Then Deborah Purcell urged Jim Shooter to consider the work of our Production Coordinator, Joe James, who was penciling the backs of some *DARK DOMINION* #0 character cards. The drawings were top-notch: They were beautifully rendered and captured the look of the series exactly as we had envisioned it. Joe accepted the challenge and immediately began penciling the stellar story you're now holding.

The inking chores for the first issue were shared by Bob Downs and Mike Barreiro, both of whom did a wonderful job.

Add to this list the incredible talent of painter Tim Perkins, and I'm sure you'll agree we've managed to put together one of the best creative teams in comics!

Drop us a line, and let us know what you think.



# **SPECIAL OFFER!**

## **WARRIORS OF PLASM #0**

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*Limited to 300 Signed and Numbered Copies.*

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